

Mayburry (Wm) from the Society

ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

Philadelphia County Medical Society,

Delivered January 23, 1867,

AGREEABLY TO A PROVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION,

BY

WM. MAYBURRY, M.D.,

AT THE CLOSE OF HIS OFFICIAL TERM AS PRESIDENT.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.

PHILADELPHIA:
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.
1867.

ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

Philadelphia County Medical Society,

Delivered January 23, 1867,

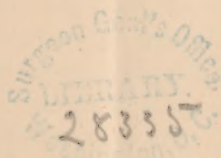
AGREEABLY TO A PROVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION,

BY

WM. MAYBURRY, M.D.,

AT THE CLOSE OF HIS OFFICIAL TERM AS PRESIDENT.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.



PHILADELPHIA:

COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.

1867.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN, MEMBERS OF THE
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY:

THE period for which I was elected your presiding officer is about expiring. The constitution provides that no one shall enjoy this distinguished honor two consecutive years. The same instrument also declares that at the close of his term of office the retiring President shall deliver an address. In obedience to this provision I now appear before you. I am fully sensible, however, that in the present instance, there would be more honor in the breach than in the observance of this requirement.

It requires no small degree of assurance, in one unaccustomed to such efforts, to address members of the medical profession of this great metropolis, renowned in the early annals of our country not only for the establishment of the first medical school on the American continent, but also for the profound erudition, the disinterested benevolence, and the honorable and dignified bearing of its medical men—a reputation which, I am proud to say, during the long series of years which gave birth to many new discoveries in science as well as invaluable improvements in medicine, has not been forfeited. I come before you with much diffidence, and in utter distrust of my ability to interest, much less instruct you. But it has been the uniform rule and practice of my life to endeavor, to the best of my humble ability, to discharge at least every *accepted* obligation of whatever nature. If I fail on the present occasion to contribute anything valuable to the general fund, I claim what your generosity will kindly accord—credit for the *will*, even though other faculties of the mind refuse to respond and obey it.

I desire, in this connection, to express my appreciation of the

very great honor done me in making me by your votes the successor in the presidential chair of such a galaxy of distinguished gentlemen as have preceded me—as a Jackson, a Bell, a Condie, a Jewell, a Gross, a Carson, a Stillé, and others equally accomplished and esteemed—men who have contributed so largely to the medical literature of this country, and of whom many have won a world-wide reputation for their scientific knowledge, their practical skill, and extensive literary and professional attainments. If my election was intended as a tribute to my known devotion to the Society from its earliest history, my exertion for the advancement of all its interests, and my feeble efforts in the great work of medical organization which has occupied the ablest minds of the profession during nearly a quarter of a century, I accept the “mild impeachment,” and beg to assure you that it will remain in my mind as a pleasant and bright remembrance as long as memory itself shall endure.

In looking around for a suitable topic upon which to hazard a few crude thoughts, I have met with no little embarrassment, my distinguished predecessors, and those who have been called to preside over kindred societies, having exhausted the list from which to select.

At one time it was my intention to attempt a general historical sketch of medical organization from the earliest times to the present, and I had with that view collected a considerable amount of material. But I soon discovered that, as it dates far back into antiquity, this would be a theme so extensive that volumes might be written without exhausting it. I next proposed to take a glimpse of its history in this country, pointing chiefly to its social, ethical, and scientific results, and speak more particularly of the rise, progress, present condition, and probable future of the Philadelphia County Medical Society. Even this, sketch it briefly as I might, could not be accomplished within the limits at my command.

The earliest suggestion, so far as my knowledge extends, of the institution of medical societies in America, is contained in a discourse delivered by John Morgan, M.D., the great pioneer of medical education in this country, at a public commencement held in the College of Philadelphia, May 30, 1765. In that address, in which he discusses the expediency of establishing a medical

school in Philadelphia, occurs the following almost prophetic passage:—

“Perhaps this medical institution, the first of its kind in America, though small in its beginning, may receive a constant accession of strength, and annually exert new vigor. It may collect a number of young persons of more than ordinary abilities, and so improve their knowledge as to spread its reputation to distant parts. By sending those abroad duly qualified, or by exciting an emulation among men of parts and literature, it may give birth to other useful institutions of a similar nature, or occasional rise by its example, to numerous societies of different kinds calculated to spread the light of knowledge through the whole American continent wherever inhabited.”

Almost simultaneously with the promulgation of these views, the subject of medical organization was earnestly discussed by the medical faculty of the then province of New Jersey. On the 17th day of June, 1766, appeared, in the columns of the *Mercury*, a paper published in the city of New York, a call for a meeting to be held on the 20th day of July ensuing, at New Brunswick, to which every gentleman of the profession in the province, favorable to the formation of a society “for their mutual improvement, the advancement of the profession, the promotion of the public good, and the cultivation of the utmost harmony and friendship,” was invited.* Whether this movement originated in consequence of the address of Dr. Morgan and the movement in Philadelphia, history does not inform us. It is presumed, however, to have been independent; for it is certain that the subject “engaged the attention of some gentlemen of the profession in the province of New Jersey, and was occasionally the topic of conversation,” for several years prior to the New Brunswick meeting.† It is also certain that the first and oldest permanently organized medical society on this continent is the Medical Society of New Jersey. Its centennial anniversary was celebrated with appropriate ceremonies on the 23d day of January last, in the city of New Brunswick, where the society was first established. Robert McKean appears to have been the first President. He and thirteen asso-

* Historical Narrative of the Medical Society of New Jersey, by Dr. William Pierson.

† Ibid.

ciates, whose names are given in the historical narrative read by direction of the society at its centennial meeting, were its founders. The names of these worthies—alike with those of Dr. William Shippen and Dr. John Morgan, with whom originated the idea of making the medical education of the American physician independent of foreign universities—ought to be held in perpetual remembrance. No better subject could be suggested for the pen of the medical biographer than to place on permanent record the achievements, in medicine, in literature, in science, and in philanthropy, of these founders of medical organization in our neighboring State. Should not the work be now undertaken, while yet the materials for such a record may be collected? Dr. McKean* was a brother of Thomas McKean, Governor of Pennsylvania. As was not unfrequently the case in the early settlement of our country, he combined the practice of physic with the offices of the holy ministry. In the annals of New Jersey, honorable mention is made of him both as a divine and physician.†

The next society, in chronological order, is the Massachusetts Medical Society, which was incorporated October 30, 1781, and organized in the following June. Edward Holyoke, of Salem, was elected the first President.‡ By the act of incorporation, power and authority were conferred upon the President and Fellows to examine and license all candidates for the practice of physic and surgery who might apply. The Massachusetts Medical Society published its first volume of Transactions§ in 1790, and, I believe, have continued their publication, annually, to the present day.

* The following inscription is from a monument in the graveyard of St. Peter's Church at Perth Amboy:—

"In memory of the Rev. Robert McKean, A. M., practitioner of physic, &c., and missionary, from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to the city of Perth Amboy, who was born July 13, 1732, N. S., and died October 17, 1767. An unshaken friend, an agreeable companion, a rational divine, a skilful physician, and, in every relation of life, a truly benevolent and honest man. Fraternal love has erected this monument."—*Barber's and Howe's Historical Collections of New Jersey*, 1844.

† Whitehead's Contributions to the Early History of Perth Amboy, 1856, p. 291, etc.

‡ Thatcher's Medical Biography.

§ Medical Papers and Communications to the Massachusetts Medical Society, 1790, page x.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia was established on January 2, 1787, and incorporated two years later. Dr. John Redman was elected its first President. One of its primary objects,* although not expressed in the charter, seems to have been the formation of a Pharmacopœia that should be authoritative throughout the country. This desideratum, which was especially felt in the early period of American medicine, was happily supplied, in 1820, by the framing and adopting of the *Pharmacopœia of the United States*. In the preparation of that work, delegates from the College of Physicians took a conspicuous part, and every page of the several decennial editions of that truly national work bears the unmistakable impress of the master-spirits of that body.

The history of the College from its early infancy, through many years of eminence and prosperity, to the building and occupancy of this magnificent hall, in which, since March 11, 1863, the Philadelphia County Medical Society has been privileged to hold its meetings, has been graphically sketched by our fellow-member, Dr. Wilson Jewell,† in his address delivered before the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, at its 15th annual session, held on the 8th day of June, 1864, for the first time in this building.

The so called *old* Philadelphia Medical Society was incorporated June 2, 1792. Its object, as defined in the act of incorporation, was "the mutual improvement of its members in the science of medicine and the promoting of medical knowledge." It was composed of two classes of members, Honorary or Senior, and Junior, the latter being under-graduates in medicine connected with the University of Pennsylvania. In virtue of their membership, and a faithful performance of their duties as members, or in case of their receiving the degree of Doctor of Medicine, the Junior members became Honorary members. Weekly meetings were held from the first Saturday of November until the first Saturday of February, inclusive.

* In an address delivered before the College of Physicians, 1787, by Dr. Benjamin Rush, occurs the following language: "By assuming the name of a College, we may give a sanction to an American Dispensatory, for I take it for granted this will be one of the first objects of our attention."

† Transactions of Med. Soc. of the State of Pennsylvania, for 1864, p. 382 et seq.

This Society "continued in uninterrupted activity" until 1845, when its regular sessions were suspended. It "maintained a long career of dignity and efficiency," and "upon the roll of its members are to be found almost all the honored names of the early days of American medicine."* Dr. Benjamin Rush (?) was probably the first President.

Its proceedings were briefly announced in the medical journals of the day, and the annual oration, pronounced by an Honorary member, by appointment, was usually published in pamphlet form.

On the title-page of an Inaugural Dissertation (on the "Chemical and Medical Properties of the Persimmon Tree, and the Analysis of Astringent Vegetables"), submitted by James Woodhouse, A. M., to the Provost, Trustees, and Medical Professors of the University of Pennsylvania, for the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1792, the author claims to be Honorary member of the Philadelphia and the American Medical Societies. In another Inaugural Dissertation, by Francis Bowes, presented in 1790, the author also claims to be Senior member of the *American Medical Society*. Of this latter body, we believe, no distinct account is extant. From the language of Dr. John Redman Coxe, in an address† delivered before the Philadelphia Medical Society, February 7th, 1800, it is evident that the *American* became merged into the former. Speaking of the Philadelphia Medical Society, Dr. Coxe remarks, that "by its junction with the American Medical Society, it has added the respectability of that institution to the youthful vigor which animated itself." It is, hence, inferred that the American must have been the older of the two societies.

In 1798 "The Medical Academy of Philadelphia" was established, whose "more particular object was to inquire into, and elucidate the history and nature of pestilential disease."‡ It was the design to publish the result of its labors periodically. It obtained a charter of incorporation in the year 1800; and carried out its design by frequently making able reports on matters pertaining to health.

The Connecticut Medical Society, by priority of its formation,

* Transactions of the Med. Soc. of the State of Pennsylvania for 1858, p. 14.

† Page 28.

‡ Medical Repository, Hexade I. vol. i. p. 385.

ought previously to have been noticed. To preserve, however, the continuity of the old medical institutions of our own metropolis, of some of which there is but little known at the present day, its consideration was postponed until now. It appears to have been founded in 1792, nearly three-quarters of a century ago. Its seventy fourth* annual convention was held at New Haven, on May the 23d and 24th of the past year (1866). The Medical Society of the County of New Haven was established at an earlier period. In 1788 it published "Cases and Observations," a work which is said to have been honorably referred to by trans Atlantic authors.†

The New Hampshire Medical Society, which we believe is still in active operation, was incorporated in the year 1791.

The Middlesex Medical Society, in the State of Massachusetts, was organized anterior to July, 1791. It was composed of practitioners of medicine residing in the county of Middlesex, which embraced the towns of Cambridge, Charleston, Medford, Watertown, and Concord. At the latter place, at a meeting of the Society held July 6th, 1791, B. Waterhouse, M.D., then the Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic in the University of Cambridge, delivered a discourse on the "Rise, Progress, and Present State of Medicine." One of the articles of association is illustrative of the high-toned ethical sentiment that characterized the practitioners of the healing art at that early period of our history; it is as follows:—

"And it shall be the duty of each member to promote the interest of this *Association*, to advance its honor and its reputation. He shall vindicate and support the character of each associate as far as justice and propriety will admit, ever esteeming it dishonorable to advance his own reputation on the ruin of another." What a contrast does this noble sentiment present to the conduct of many physicians of eminence and influence of our own day, who, by various innuendoes, if not by direct means, especially if the patient is wealthy or influential, do not scruple to impair the patient's confidence in his regular medical attendant, and to ingratiate themselves into his good graces! It was the custom of

* Medical Record, vol. i. p. 407.

† Thatcher's Med. Biography.

this Society to interrogate, through its President, each member at the opening of every meeting on matters of general professional interest met with in his readings during the interim; on visitations of epidemics in the circle of his practice; on resuscitation in cases of asphyxia, and the method pursued; on difficulties met with in the theory and practice of physic needing elucidation; on his knowledge of young beginners in the healing art deserving encouragement; on "any weighty affair in hand" in which advice might be serviceable; and on his knowledge of any service that the Society might render "mankind, their country, or themselves."*

The Medical Society of South Carolina was incorporated in 1794.

The Medical and Chirurgical Society of the State of Maryland was incorporated January 20th, 1799.†

The North Carolina Medical Society was instituted by a convention of the Faculty of that State on Monday, 16th day of April, 1800, at Raleigh.‡ That Society must have suspended operations at an early day. In 1848(?), when the present Medical Society of North Carolina was organized, the fact of the existence of the earlier institution seems to have been almost forgotten.

The New York County Medical Society, which numbers at the present time a membership embracing a very great proportion of the talent, respectability, skill, learning, and activity of the profession in the city of New York, was organized in 1805. It received its act of incorporation July 1st, 1806, and originated from the *New York Medical Society*, established in 1788, which was the first medical organization in the State.§ The County Society celebrated its sixty-first anniversary on the 12th day of November last.||

The Medical Society of the State of New York was organized in the year 1807. Its first President was Dr. Wm. McClelland. The first part of the first volume of the transactions of the Society was published in 1832. During the first twenty-five years of its

* Benjamin Waterhouse's Address, 1791.

† Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of New York.

‡ Medical Repository, vol. iv. p. 202.

§ Manual prepared for the meeting of American Medical Association in 1864.

|| Medical Record.

existence the mere *proceedings* of its meetings, together with the Presidents' annual addresses, were published in pamphlet form. Since then the Transactions have appeared annually, and contain much valuable information.

The Rhode Island State Medical Society was incorporated in 1812.

The Medical Society of the District of Columbia was incorporated, by an act of Congress, February 16th, 1819.*

The Medical Society of Maine was incorporated in 1821. By its act of incorporation it is required to choose censors for examining and licensing students in medicine.

An act was passed, Feb. 20th, 1824, by the Legislature of Ohio, providing for the incorporation of medical societies for the purpose of regulating the practice of physic and surgery in that State.

The Medical Society of Virginia was organized about the year 1825.

The Medical Society of the State of Mississippi was incorporated February 4th, 1829.†

The State Medical Society of Indiana was incorporated anterior to 1830.

The Medical Society of Tennessee was incorporated about the year 1829.

In many of the States where incorporated medical societies exist, the practice of medicine is regulated by law. New York is entitled to the honor of having adopted the first effectual measure in this direction. In 1760 its Colonial General Assembly ordained that "no person whatever should practise as a physician or surgeon, in the city of New York, before he shall have been examined in physic or surgery, and approved of, and admitted by one of his Majesty's Council, the judges of the Supreme Court, the King's Attorney-General, and the Mayor of the city of New York, for the time being, or by any three or more of them, taking to their assistance for such examinations such proper person or persons as they in their discretion shall think fit."‡ In 1772 a similar law was enacted in New Jersey. This is all that ap-

* Transactions of the Medical Society of New York.

† Trans. of the Med. Soc. of the State of N. Y., vol. p. 203.

‡ Sketch of the state of American Medicine before the Revolution, by Dr. J. B. Beck.

pears to have been done previous to the Revolution. Subsequently, as we have seen, a few State societies were formed. Nearly all the incorporated State societies had conferred upon them the right to examine and license medical students. In many States no one could legally practise medicine and collect fees without being licensed by the State or District Society. Since the multiplication, however, of irregular practitioners of various sorts, the laws, regulating the practice of medicine in many States, have been repealed, and the protection, which both the public and the profession at one time enjoyed, has been almost entirely withdrawn.

Passing by the establishment of many local societies in different sections of the country, we now reach a period when new interest was awakened in regard to medical education, and to the complete organization of the profession in the United States. On the 5th day of January, 1835, in pursuance of a circular letter, addressed to "All scientific practitioners of medicine and surgery in the State of Ohio," a convention of physicians was held in the city of Columbus, "with the grand design of organizing for practical utility the whole scientific medical power of the State."* Among other subjects, "the regulation of professional etiquette, the construction of independent medical societies, and the improvement of the state of medical education," claimed the attention of that Convention. It adjourned to meet at the same place in January, 1838, and subsequently held a third session in the city of Cleveland on the 14th and 15th days of May, 1839. At the annual meeting held at Columbus, among other resolutions, relating to medical instruction in the United States, the following was adopted:—

"*Resolved*, That if the various schools of the Union were to send representatives to a meeting at some central point, to confer together, many of their existing defects, by a simultaneous, co-operative effort, might be successfully remedied, and that we respectfully recommend such a convention to be held. Till when it would not be practicable, nor should it be expected, that any single institution will attempt the reforms which are here proposed."[†]

Almost simultaneously with the publication of the proceedings

* The American Journal of the Med. Sciences, vol. xvi. p. 364.

† The American Journal of the Medical Sciences for 1838, vol. xxii. p. 526.

of this Convention, appeared those of New York, Connecticut and Tennessee*—almost extreme points of the then Union, evincing that the profession was beginning to labor with increased zeal for the advancement of medical science. At the annual meeting of the New Hampshire Medical Society, held in June, 1838, it was voted, that "This Society recommend an Annual Convention, to consist of delegates from the various medical schools and societies in the Union: that the first convention be proposed to be holden A. D. 1840; and that the Secretary send a notice of this vote to the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, and the American Journal of the Medical Sciences of Philadelphia."†

At the annual session of the Medical Society of the State of New York, held in February, 1839, at Albany, Dr. John M'Call, of Utica, introduced the following preamble and resolution:—‡

"WHEREAS, A national medical convention would advance, in the apprehension of this Society, the cause of the medical profession throughout our land, in thus affording an interchange of views and sentiments on the most interesting of all subjects, that involving men's health and the means of securing and recovering the same;

Resolved, That, in our opinion, such convention is deemed advisable and important; and we would hence recommend that it be held in the year 1840, on the first Tuesday in May of that year, in the city of Philadelphia, and that it consist of three delegates from each State medical society, and one from each regularly constituted medical school in the United States; and that the President and Secretary of this Society be, and they are hereby instructed and required to transmit, as soon as may be, a circular to that effect to each State medical society, and medical school in said United States."

These are the first movements, of which we have any record, suggesting a convention of delegates, not only from all the regularly organized medical colleges, but also from the regularly organized medical societies throughout the whole country. How far the conventional proceedings in Ohio, already referred to,

* American Journal of the Medical Sciences, vol. xxiv. p. 429.

† Ibid., vol. xxiii. p. 264.

‡ Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of New York, for 1839—Appendix, p. 36 et seq.

which had then been before the profession for several years, influenced the action in New Hampshire, and the latter that in New York, is not known. Nothing, however, of importance grew out of these movements, perhaps, because there were but few *State* societies in existence at the time, and the colleges, who were duly addressed on the subject by a committee appointed for the purpose, did not seem disposed to act, and many did not even respond to the call.*

The subject of medical education and reform in the schools continued, however, to be agitated by the profession in different sections of the country; and especially by the Medical Society of the State of New York. Various able reports by the "Committee of Correspondence," for several consecutive years, were made and discussed. At length, at the annual meeting held at Albany, in February, 1845, Dr. N. S. Davis, then of Binghamton, who had given much attention to the subject, offered the following preamble and resolutions, which were adopted with much unanimity:—

"WHEREAS, It is believed that a national convention would be conducive to the elevation of the standard of medical education in the United States, *and, Whereas*, There is no mode of accomplishing so desirable an object, without concert of action on the part of the medical societies, colleges, and institutions of all the States, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the New York State Medical Society earnestly recommend a national medical convention of delegates from medical societies and colleges in the whole Union, to convene in the City of New York, on the first Tuesday in May, in the year 1846, for the purpose of adopting some concerted action on the subject set forth in the foregoing preamble."† Drs. Davis, McNaughton, and Van Buren were appointed a committee to carry out the proposed measure. Mainly through the untiring activity of Dr. N. S. Davis, now Professor of the Principles and Practice of Medicine in the Rush Medical College, Chicago, and the co-operation of his colleagues, a convention of members of the profession, representing *fourteen* States, was held in the city of New York,

* History of the American Medical Association.

† Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of New York, vol. vi., appendix, p. 148.

in the month and year named in the foregoing resolution. After an ineffectual and highly discourteous effort on the part of the delegates from the University of New York, in whose edifice the Convention was sitting, to dissolve it, and after the appointment of Committees on "Organization; on a Uniform and Elevated Standard of Requirements for the Degree of M. D.; on Preliminary Education; on Ethics; on the Separation of Licensing and Teaching; and on a Nomenclature of Disease, adapted to the United States;" the Convention adjourned to meet in Philadelphia, on the first Tuesday in May, 1847. At the Convention in New York delegates were present from fourteen States of the Union; only seven *State* societies, however, were represented; from the remaining seven States delegates appeared from colleges and local societies.* At the Convention held in Philadelphia, where the American Medical Association completed its organization and commenced its actual existence, *twenty-one* States and the District of Columbia were represented, including delegates from *fifteen* regularly organized *State* societies.†

"The great leading object, the fundamental idea which impelled the formation of our great national organization," as may be inferred from the movements in the profession during a series of years previous, was the improvement of our system of *medical education*, and consequently the elevation of the whole profession. One of the earliest and most important results, which followed the establishment of a permanent National Association, was the organization of new societies and associations, in States where none existed before, and the resuscitation of many old societies which had ceased to maintain an active existence. Between the sitting of the Convention in Philadelphia and the ensuing meeting of the Association at Baltimore, new State societies were organized in South Carolina, Alabama, and Pennsylvania, and the old ones in Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Ohio, and Wisconsin were greatly invigorated and strengthened. The meeting held at Boston, in 1849, was attended by over *four hundred* delegates, representing the profession and institutions of *twenty-four* States. At the Richmond meeting, in 1853, there were representatives present from *twenty-six* States, and the meeting at New York, the

* Proceedings of the Nat. Med. Convention, p. 11 et seq.

† Ibid., R. 24 et seq.

following year, had representatives from *thirty* States, the District of Columbia, the army and navy of the United States, and the American Medical Society of Paris. At the meeting held in Boston, in 1865, *six hundred and sixteen* delegates and permanent members were in attendance.

The Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania was organized in the city of Lancaster in April, 1848. Ten counties and twenty-one medical societies and institutions were represented on that occasion. That Society, as well as the Northern Medical Association of Philadelphia, owes, in a great measure, its origin to the influence exerted on the professional mind of the country through the movement so auspiciously begun in New York to organize the profession throughout the land. The latter—the Northern Medical—antedates both the American and the Pennsylvania State societies. It was established January 7, 1847, and sent full delegations to the conventions that organized both the former.

The Philadelphia County Medical Society, whose anniversary we are assembled to celebrate, was established subsequently to the formation of the State Society, and in accordance with the general plan provided in the Constitution of the State Society for the organization of the profession in Pennsylvania. On the 11th day of December, 1848, a preliminary meeting was held at the Hall of the College of Pharmacy, at which eleven gentlemen were present. It is to be regretted that no record of the names of those in attendance at that and at the subsequent adjourned meetings was kept. The meeting was temporarily organized by appointing Dr. Samuel Jackson, late of Northumberland, Chairman, and Dr. D. Francis Condie, Secretary. The following resolution, presented by Dr. Wilson Jewell, was adopted:—

“*Resolved*, That it is expedient to organize a County Medical Society for Philadelphia.”

On motion of Dr. Isaac Hays, it was further

“*Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed to draught a Constitution and By-Laws for the government of the Philadelphia County Medical Society, and report the same at an adjourned meeting of the physicians of the city and county to be held this day week.”

On the 18th day of December, 1848, the physicians of Phila-

delphia reassembled, and adopted a Constitution and By-Laws reported by the committee appointed at the former meeting, and resolved themselves into The Philadelphia County Medical Society. The organization was, however, not completed until the first stated meeting, held on the 16th day of January, 1849, when the following officers were elected: President, Dr. Samuel Jackson, late of Northumberland; Vice-Presidents, Drs. George Fox and T. F. Betton; Secretary, Dr. D. Francis Condie; Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Henry S. Patterson; Treasurer, Dr. M. M. Reeve; and Censors, Drs. Thomas Hobson, Wilson Jewell, John F. Meigs, Isaac Parrish, and David Tucker. The Committee on Constitution and By-Laws, which had been authorized at the preliminary meeting to have the same engrossed, and to "receive the signatures of the constituent members of the Society, as well as of such other regular members of the profession as might be desirous of becoming members," reported that "they had obtained the signatures of *forty* of the practitioners of the city and county of Philadelphia." At this and the next meeting, *eighteen* others, some of whom had attended the previous meeting, affixed their names to the Constitution, making in all fifty-eight, who are regarded as the original founders of the Society. Strictly speaking, however, in accordance with parliamentary usages, those only who were actually present when the meeting resolved itself into a society ought to be regarded as its real founders. Of these, however, there is no full record. Of the former number, forty-two are believed to be still living, of whom only sixteen remain in active fellowship with the Society; sixteen, for various reasons, have resigned their membership; ten have permanently removed beyond the bounds of the Society; one forfeited his membership for non-payment of dues; and fourteen have been called to their long home in another sphere of existence, laden in different degrees with the honors of lives, of various durations, well spent in administering to the wants and sufferings of humanity. Of the so-called founders of this Society, nine received its highest honor, all of whom are still living, and of whom six remain in full fellowship with it; twenty were also founders of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, of whom sixteen survive, four died while members, three removed beyond its limits, seven either resigned or forfeited their membership, and six are still enrolled

on its list of members as in full connection with the Society. Seven of these original members of the State Society, of whom two only are now living, were also among the founders of the Northern Medical Association of Philadelphia, an institution which has steadily pursued, from its earliest foundation to the present time, a career of unpretending activity, and has accomplished much good in the section of the city in which it is located, especially in promoting feelings of cordiality and fraternity, and in diffusing correct ethical views among the members of the profession.

Thus, to return from our digression, commenced the career of the *Philadelphia County Medical Society*. But its real origin must be ascribed, and can be traced, as has already been intimated, to the reflex influence which the institution of the American Medical Association exerted on the professional mind of the country. Even though Dr. Nathan S. Davis, now of Chicago, named, with some propriety, "the father" of that organization, did not conceive the *idea* of a great national association, which he does not seem to claim, to him most emphatically belongs the honor of successfully carrying it out. And the zeal with which he originally embarked in the work, an almost herculean undertaking, has not in the least abated. This is fully shown by the regularity with which he continues to attend its sessions, his deep interest in its prosperity, as well as his earnest appeal to the profession in its behalf while its late presiding officer, an honor most worthily conferred, but only too long withheld.

At an adjourned meeting of the Society, whose history we are thus imperfectly attempting to sketch, held on the 30th day of January 1849, delegations were elected to the American Medical Association, and to the State Medical Society. And this Society has been represented—sometimes largely and ably—every year since in both these bodies. Carefully written reports appear on the minutes from both delegations, giving a clear synopsis of everything interesting of a medical or professional character that had transpired during the sessions of either body. It is to be regretted that these reports, thus early inaugurated, have so frequently of late been neglected. Should not the custom by all means be revived, and their preparation be made obligatory on the respective delegations?

The Society, at its early meeting, passed resolutions favoring the "enactment of a law for the registration of births, marriages, and deaths." From this effort, in connection with a similar movement in the College of Physicians, resulted the general registration act of January 12, 1852. This law, after an imperfect trial during a single year, did not seem, however, to be adapted to the wants of the whole State, and was consequently repealed in 1853. The present law, embracing in its provisions only the consolidated city of Philadelphia, was passed March 8, 1860, and was the joint production of the College of Physicians and the Philadelphia County Medical Society—the movement having originated in the latter body.

At the October meeting of the same year, Dr. Thomas Hobson introduced a resolution to hold special meetings "during the months of November, December, January, February, and March, for the reception of medical communications, discussions, &c." The President and Secretary were constituted a committee to obtain the presentation of original communications at these meetings.

The following is an enumeration of the papers which were read and discussed during the period embraced in Dr. Hobson's resolution:—

"An Outline of several Important Points in reference to the Pathology and Treatment of Dysentery," by the President, Dr. Samuel Jackson.

"The Use of Tonics, particularly Quinine, in the Treatment of Remittent Fever," by Dr. Isaac Parrish.

"A paper on the Population of Philadelphia, and the Preponderance of Male over Female Births," by Dr. G. Emerson.

From these meetings, which, with some slight intermissions, have been continued during the winter months ever since, originated the so-called "conversational meetings," which have contributed not a little to the edification and mutual instruction of the members.

The next matter of general importance was the appointment of a committee on public hygiene at the meeting in January, 1850, of which Dr. Bell was chairman. In consequence, however, of his removal to Cincinnati, Ohio, as Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, no report was made.

The Society has always taken a lively interest in sanitary

science and reform. It was always, and usually ably represented in the Quarantine and Sanitary Conventions of the United States. The originator of that National Sanitary Congress, and its first President, is an honored member of this Society. It held its first session on May the 13th, 1857, in this city, at which seventy-three delegates from nine States were present. The delegation from Philadelphia—including the Board of Health, the Board of Trade, the College of Physicians, and this Society—consisted of twenty-one representatives, of whom sixteen were, at one time or another, members of this Society.

In the summer of 1851, the public mind was much agitated by several deaths having occurred in consequence of the carelessness with which physicians' prescriptions were compounded by apothecaries, with a *quasi* belief that similar carelessness was exhibited on the part of physicians, by the loose, illegible, and hasty manner in which, frequently, their prescriptions were prepared. With a view to arrest what was believed to be a growing evil, a committee of conference was appointed by the Philadelphia County Medical Society to meet a similar committee from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, for the purpose of considering the means best adapted to prevent the occurrence of similar mistakes in the future.

This joint committee, of which Dr. Condie was chosen chairman, made an able and elaborate report to the bodies respectively from which it emanated. In that report were contained some excellent observations "on the relations that should exist between physicians and pharmacutists." The report was published in their *Journal*¹ by order of the College of Pharmacy, and was also ordered to be published by the County Society in circular form for distribution among the physicians and pharmacutists of Philadelphia. This latter measure, however, it is to be regretted, was never carried out. Many excellent hints contained in that report emanated from the pen of Prof. Wm. Procter, and accomplished a considerable amount of good. Had, as was ordered, a copy of the report been placed in the hands of every physician and apothecary of the city, perhaps many of the serious errors, which the community have had since to deplore, might have been prevented.

¹ Philadelphia Journal of Pharmacy, New Series, vol. xviii., page 27 et seq.

At the stated meeting in Oct. 1851, Dr. Isaac Parrish presented the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:—

“Resolved, That the rapid increase of population, and the wide expansion of Philadelphia, demand that immediate measures be taken to secure spacious public grounds in the neighborhood of the densely-built portions of the city, which, while they form beautiful and healthful places of resort, will, at no distant day, prove the means of purifying and renovating the air in the midst of a dense and crowded population.

“Resolved, That our experience and observation as physicians have convinced us that a prolific source of the infantile diseases and mortality of the summer months may be found in the confined and heated atmosphere of the courts and alleys of the city, and in the want of airy public grounds, easily accessible to the poorer classes—in the pure air of which the depressing influence of these causes of disease would be measurably counteracted.

“Resolved, That, in the opinion of this Society, much disease and suffering might be avoided by liberal and enlightened legislation, directed not only to the removal of obnoxious causes of disease, but to the prevention of those evils which invariably arise in all large cities, if not provided against by the wisdom and forecast of those intrusted with this responsible duty.

“Resolved, That in a matter so seriously affecting the prosperity of Philadelphia as that of providing ample and well located public grounds, the expenditure of money, and the slight temporary increase of taxation, should not weigh against the immense advantages that will accrue not only to the present inhabitants of the city, but to generations that may succeed them.”

Copies of these resolutions, properly signed by the officers of the Society, were directed to be laid before the several corporate bodies who had control of the matter, with the request that they should give to it their early attention. What effect this action had, coming from the source it did, upon our “city fathers,” and those of the surrounding districts, cannot be said with certainty; but it is believed that to the movements of the Society just alluded to we are, to some degree, indebted for the park on Lemon Hill, and the squares in Kensington and Southwark, which minister so largely to the beauty and health of our city

Other great public enterprises, in which the comfort, health, and lives of the population of this rapidly growing city were involved, have ever met, as will appear in the progress of its history, with the undivided support of the Society. The purity of the Schuylkill River, which is now our only source for a supply of water for drinking and for all culinary and other domestic purposes, may no doubt be secured by a similar appeal to the City Councils, on the part of this Society, urging them to accept the liberal offer of some of our citizens towards the purchase by the city of the grounds on the western banks of the Schuylkill River, above Fairmount dam.

The first President, Dr. Samuel Jackson, was annually re-elected for four successive years, until an amendment to the Constitution, adopted in June, 1852, restricted the presidential term to a single year.

Dr. John F. Lamb, of Frankford, was the second President, and annually afterwards a new President has been chosen. Some of the most prominent medical gentlemen of the profession in Philadelphia have thus, in turn, been honored, who have uniformly discharged the duties of the chair faithfully, impartially, and acceptably. Whether this "one-term principle," or rotation in office, which the renowned and lamented Chapman, at the first meeting of the American Medical Association, initiated by "precept and example," is the best policy to be pursued by a permanent local society, has been seriously questioned. For a delegated body like the American Medical Association, or a State Society, where every section of the country or State is usually represented by the most eminent men in the profession, "monopoly of honor or privileges ought not to be permitted to any portion of it." But does the principle work so well and satisfactorily in the Philadelphia County Society? Do the ex-Presidents attend the meetings of the Society as punctually and regularly? Do they work as diligently and faithfully as chairmen and members of committees? Do they manifest as deep an interest in the prosperity of the Society as they did previously to their elevation to the Presidency? Is not the very contrary the general rule? Is it not too often the case that the *retiring* President becomes in fact a *retiring* member also? It becomes, therefore, an important question, whether it would not be the wisest course, and add greatly to the reputation of the Society, to elect

to the chairs of President and Vice-Presidents the most distinguished of its members, having really the welfare of the Society at heart, and to re-elect them annually so long as they evince efficiency and activity in their respective offices. These honors would then be regarded as worth something, and might bring competitors into the field again who are now devoted entirely to other learned bodies.

At the meeting of April 19, 1854, on motion of Dr. R. P. Thomas, a committee was appointed "to confer with the Board of Guardians of the Poor in relation to providing facilities for a course of clinical instruction in the wards of the Philadelphia Hospital, Blockley, open to students of medicine generally." This Committee addressed a communication to the Board of Guardians, in which was prominently set forth "the advantages likely to result in a medical point of view from the readmission of medical students into the wards of the Philadelphia Hospital, and also in the pecuniary returns to the county from the sale of tickets of admission." This appeal, which was a remarkably strong one, aided by the personal efforts of the chairman of the committee and other members of the profession, had no doubt considerable influence with the Board of Guardians, and prepared the way for the future favorable consideration of the subject. To Dr. Thomas, perhaps, more than to any other single gentleman, are we, as a profession, indebted for the re-establishment of clinical instruction in the oldest and largest hospital of Philadelphia. With him the idea to reopen the wards of that institution, which had been closed since 1845, to medical students, first originated. With his accustomed untiring perseverance, in connection with others who had become enlisted in the cause, he continued his efforts until the beginning of September, 1854, when the Board of Guardians were induced to change the former policy of the institution, and to elect medical and surgical staffs. Consequently, in October ensuing, by these staffs a course of clinical lectures was commenced.

On the 14th of June, 1854, a movement was inaugurated which gave rise to no inconsiderable excitement in the profession, but resulted in elevating the status of membership in the Society. At the annual session of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, held at Pottsville, authority was granted to the Philadelphia County Society, should it deem the same expedient,

to change its name and to effect a complete reorganization. The true but concealed object was in reality to get rid by this means of some obnoxious members. Pending a motion to "dissolve as the Philadelphia County Medical Society for the purpose of reorganizing under the name of the Philadelphia City Medical Society," a motion to refer the whole subject to a select committee prevailed. This committee, after a "full investigation of the objects, aims, and bearings" of the matter referred to it, reported adversely as to the measure. The committee, however, recommended the elevation of the then standard of qualification for membership so as "to secure the Society more fully against the admission of unworthy members," and enjoined on the officers and members generally to use all reasonable diligence in reporting and subjecting to punishment every case of infraction of the Constitution and Code of Ethics. These recommendations were unanimously adopted. The laws of the Society and its ethics began from thence to be more rigidly enforced. The Constitution was amended so as to make membership more difficult, requiring fuller knowledge and higher qualifications on the part of the candidate. The professional conduct of its members was also more closely scrutinized; those found guilty of violating or disregarding the conventional usages of the profession, or of conduct derogatory to its character or honor, were summarily dealt with.

About that period various projects intimately connected with the advancement of the members of the Society in knowledge, and their elevation in character—prominent objects in its formation—occupied its attention. The expediency of publishing its transactions in a permanent form was earnestly discussed, and urged by prominent members. The establishment also of a Library, Reading Room, and Pathological Cabinet was seriously contemplated. Upon the favorable report of a select committee, to whom the consideration of the "expediency and feasibility" of these projects had been referred, approving resolutions were adopted. A Library Committee was appointed, and the initiative taken to "place within the reach of the members the leading medical periodicals of America and Europe," and "such standard medical works" as might "be selected by the Committee on Library." This project was, however, temporarily abandoned, and has never been resumed.

On January 17th, 1855, at the stated meeting, Drs. Joseph

R. Bryan and Thomas Bond, the latter having removed from the county, resigned their membership in the Society. These were the first resignations that occurred. Several years later, however, a large number of members, including some of the most active and distinguished, followed the example thus set them.

This so called "evolution of talent, learning, skill, and respectability," was and continues to be a source of as much regret to many of their remaining colleagues as it would be of gratification to welcome their return to the Society.

The first death of a member, of which there is any record, was that of Prof. Wm. R. Grant, M.D. It was announced at the meeting of April 20, 1852. Since then over fifty others,* while in full fellowship with the Society, have gone to

"That undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns."

Of most of these brief biographical notices were prepared by direction of the Society, and published in the different numbers of the Transactions of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania.

When, in 1857, scientific bodies, with the national and State

* At a conversational meeting held January 9, 1853, a report was presented by the retiring Recording Secretary, Dr. R. P. Thomas, in which occurs the following language: "Since that period (the organization of the Society, when the names of fifty-eight physicians were enrolled as original members), 277 practitioners of medicine have been duly elected members, of whom eight, recently elected, have not yet signed the Constitution, leaving a total membership of 277. But strange to say, for various reasons, in the short period of seven years one-fourth of the whole number is no longer included in fellowship with us."

"Thus, those, who felt so little interest in the objects of the Society, and their advancement, as to have forfeited the rights of membership, number 29	
Forfeited membership for non-payment of dues	1
Expelled	1
Resigned	5
Removed permanently from the county	14
Deceased	26
	<hr/> 76
Leaving the present number of members	201
And of members elect	8
	<hr/> 209"

governments, were manifesting their sorrow for the loss, which science and humanity had sustained in the death of the celebrated Arctic explorer, Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, a Philadelphian by birth, education, and sympathy, the Philadelphia County Medical Society united in expressing its grief at his untimely end, and passed a series of resolutions highly complimentary to the departed, and consolatory to his bereaved parents and family. "In the brilliant achievements accomplished by Dr. Kane, the Society recognized the great capabilities conferred by a well-grounded medical education, when directed by talent, and urged by zeal and generous impulses, to extend the bounds of knowledge and accomplish the great objects of philanthropy."

The unparalleled indignity done the profession in 1857, by the Board of Guardians of the Poor, in elevating to the responsible position of Physician-in-Chief of the Philadelphia Hospital, a person who had rendered himself obnoxious by his disregard of its ethics and conventional usages, must remain fresh in the memory of many of those who surround me. It called forth the righteous indignation of the profession in almost every section of the country. The Philadelphia County Society promptly convened and resented the insult thus offered to the profession. It nobly sustained the action of the Resident Physicians, and approved the course of the consulting staffs, all of whom resigned their respective positions, and declined to serve under, or in connection with, an individual who they believed had forfeited all claim to professional fellowship by becoming a vendor of secret nostrums; one who was accused also of other unprofessional conduct, and had for these acts been expelled from the American Medical Association. Our Society subjected the delinquent to discipline, and inflicted upon him all the punishment which was within its power. It likewise exacted and obtained reluctant apologies from such—including gentlemen in high places in the profession—as had by recommendation, verbal or written, been in the least instrumental in elevating the party referred to to the post which it was considered that he disgraced. Fifty-six members, with but short notice, assembled and participated in the above proceedings. These facts are here introduced, and similar ones are interspersed elsewhere, to show the high ethical tone, which, in its most palmy days, characterized the Society.

In 1857 the Society had 215 active members enrolled on its list. On one occasion, to which more particular reference may be made hereafter, during high professional excitement, 104 votes were polled at an election for officers and delegates. In 1866 there were only 145 members enrolled, and 36 was the highest number present at any meeting during the year. In 1865 the highest number present was 34, when it had been announced that both an adjourned stated and a conversational meeting would be held on the same evening, in consequence of not having had an elective quorum at the previous regular meeting. The largest number present in 1864 was 33. With this gradual numerical declension in membership, and the decrease in the attendance upon the meetings of the Society, has there not also been a corresponding decline in that high-toned ethical bearing which characterized similar associations in the days of Rush and Physick, and even at a later period?

Do not the indifference and carelessness evinced in the preparation of many of the scientific papers read before the Society, the procrastination of the reports directed to be made, the careless, hasty, and incomplete manner in which other duties are performed—do not, we ask, all these combine to show that there is a very perceptible and deplorable departure from former usage? And what effect has all this on the dignity, efficiency, and advancement in knowledge of the Society?

As early as 1857—nine years ago—it was already felt that the important objects contemplated in the formation of the Society had failed to be realized to any great extent, and a committee was appointed to report “a plan of operations by which the confidence and attendance of its entire membership might be secured, and its facilities augmented, whereby the important and desirable intentions of its founders should be more successfully carried out.” In the report of that Committee the belief is expressed that while “there exists some cause of complaint as to the want of affiliation among the members of the Society, and a deficient interest in all that relates to its healthful condition as an association for medical improvements, they, nevertheless, are convinced that much good to the profession has already resulted from its existence, and that it possesses in its present membership an amount of learning, talent, and energy sufficient to render it fully competent

to the task of elevating its dignity and promoting its scientific character, as the representative of the great body of the profession in our midst, to a still greater height, provided these elements are properly cared for and directed." After alluding to the dissatisfaction which is found "in every association with its workings," the "petty jealousies" which "seldom fail to arise in the minds of those who are alike aspirants and even competitors for distinction," and the "decline in the active co-operation of many valuable members in the promotion of the general interests of the Society" consequent upon "favoritism and the exclusiveness of cliques," the Committee, without attributing it to "either of the evils indicated," positively affirm "that the Society has not received that zealous co-operation on the part of a large class of its members that was anticipated." Among other suggestions made, with a view to remove the evils complained of, and to "extend its influence, enrich its archives, and earn for it a broad distinction among kindred institutions," the Committee proposed that the Society should establish a "series of lectures upon subjects not incorporated in the course of instruction in our medical schools, or if noticed, treated only in a superficial manner." This praiseworthy project, however, like that of the library and reading room, failed in consequence of the non-procurement of a sufficient fund to meet the necessary expenses. The "universal distress, and almost general ruin" in the fall of 1857, "appalled the minds of our countrymen, and seemed to forbid the serious consideration of any undertaking that required the outlay of money." "How," say the Committee to whom was referred the subject, in their very elaborate report, "shall plans formed about six months since, when the community was believed to be in a state of high prosperity, be executed at a moment of unexampled ruin and distress?"

About this period—in the beginning of the year 1858—there again arose undue excitement in the Society. An election, held in January of that year, when 72 members were present, was, at an adjourned meeting, when 84 members were present, set aside as irregular, and a new election ordered to be held. The Society adjourned for the purpose to the 6th of February, when 104 members were present and voted. To these proceedings a solemn protest was filed, and entered on the minutes; but still the elec-

tion went on. The result was not materially different from the former—nearly all the same officers and delegates being elected that had been returned before. The occasion of the apparent *double* dissatisfaction was the appointment of the committees of nomination through the supposed influence of a clique—to rebuke which act there seemed to have been a concerted action on the part of a large number of members who were not in league with it. Without wishing to revive reminiscences, which ought perhaps to be buried in oblivion, and which may awaken sincere regrets in the bosoms of many individuals, who, at that time, felt, thought, and acted apparently in opposition to each other, your speaker embraces this opportunity of emphatically disclaiming, in this public way, any knowledge of, although he was accused of having been privy to, the scheme of erasing certain names from, and inserting others on, the ticket. When, however, the effort was made to declare the election void, for reasons which were by many regarded as insufficient and untenable, he opposed by his vote and influence, and favored and labored for the return, with a few exceptions, of the officers and delegates who had, undoubtedly, been legally elected before, and in accordance with former custom and usage. But from that period the interest in the Society began to wane, the meetings were less fully and regularly attended, the membership gradually fell off, and a general declension in the interest of the affairs of the Society ensued.

The excitement in the profession, thus occasioned, had scarcely time to subside before it was followed by a still greater convulsion, growing out of the alleged unprofessional conduct of one of its members. Cases of discipline became frequent, and every known infraction of the laws of the Society and ethics of the profession was sure to be visited with speedy punishment.

About this period a communication was received from a member of Select Council, T. Cuyler, Esq., soliciting the views of the profession, in its associated capacity, "upon interments within the densely built portions of the city." Dr. John Bell was appointed chairman of a committee "to prepare and submit to Councils the sentiments of this Society, which were adverse to intra-mural interments, and urging the vital importance of preventing by law or ordinance the future interments of the dead in the densely

built portions of this city." The Committee, at a subsequent meeting, submitted a report, written by the chairman. Owing to the imperfect manner in which the minutes of the Society were kept at that period, no extracts from it can be furnished. Mention is here made of this subject of intra-mural interments to show the high estimation in which the sentiments of the Society were beginning to be held. An expression on any subject pertaining to the public health was exerting its proper influence on the city government, as well as upon public opinion generally.

The next question, upon which the profession was somewhat divided, although the Society itself was a unit, was the division of representation in the State Society between several societies in Philadelphia County. A powerful remonstrance was adopted by the Society, and presented to the State Society, against altering the Constitution of the latter so as to allow of delegates being received from other bodies in Philadelphia than from the Philadelphia County Society. This remonstrance prevailed with the State Society. The Constitution remained unaltered, and the petition of the gentlemen composing a body which had been regarded as defunct for years was denied. This led to other withdrawals from membership.

Evidences of the high standard of ethics which the Society recognized and sustained occurred continually. Several applications for restoration to membership by a gentleman who had been expelled for infractions of the Constitution, are spread on the minutes. Complete and unconditional apologies accompanied these, as well as candid acknowledgments that the character of the applicant and his standing both in the community and the profession, as also that his business had become seriously affected on account of his anomalous position.

The next matter of paramount importance to the profession, "whether regarded in an ethical or pecuniary point of view," was the adoption of a uniform standard of charges for the whole county, and thus supplying a want which had been long felt. Previously to the year 1864 the Society had never been able to agree upon a Fee Bill. That of the Collège of Physicians was generally recognized, and had been, with slight modifications, adopted, years before, by the Northern Medical Association. It had always been contended, however, that while the fee bill of the

College was not adapted to the rural or suburban districts, yet two fee bills, "emanating from independent sources, and differing in the specifications of charges, would nullify each other, and produce endless confusion." Happily, at the period referred to, the three bodies, embracing nearly every practitioner of respectability in the consolidated city, adopted the same scale of charges, the College of Physicians having modified their *old* bill in accordance with the necessities of the times. In this bill, as the Committee that had the subject under consideration very properly observed, "the reserved right still remains with every member of the Society, as it does with every Fellow of the College, while conforming as closely as possible to the recognized standard, to take into consideration the pecuniary ability of his patient, and, where the means of the latter are limited, to make such deductions from the original fees charged as to him may seem proper."

On December 14, 1864, "in view of the enormity of the offence of criminal abortion, and its common and increasing practice in this and every other community," "a committee was appointed to report what action, if any, should be adopted to bring about such a state of morals as will tend to lessen the crime, and thus prevent the practice of a sin of every day's occurrence." This Committee has not yet finally reported. On several occasions the subject was warmly debated, and individual members of the Committee presented their views unreservedly. Their report on so vitally important a subject is anxiously awaited. It is hoped, too, that something may be suggested that will arrest this increasing evil, and thoroughly enlighten the public in regard to the physical dangers and the immorality, or irreligious nature, if you prefer, of the abominable practice.

During the late rebellion—the most wicked and causeless the world ever knew—the patriotism of the Society became early aroused. At the outbreak of the war, many of its members promptly tendered their services to their country in a professional capacity, and others even as private soldiers. Some of these sealed their devotion to their country's cause with their blood, others eminently distinguished themselves in the surgical staffs of the navy and army, while all performed their duties in their several positions, whether in the hospitals or on the field of battle, heroically, faithfully, and with, we trust, humanity.

And who does not remember, with honest pride, the patriotic offer to the government, in the event of an emergency, of a large portion of its membership as volunteer surgeons, who, from infirmity of age and on account of other justifiable reasons, could not join the Union army in the tented field?

Upon the reception of the melancholy intelligence of the dastardly and traitorous assassination of the beloved chief magistrate of the nation, Abraham Lincoln, at an hour when the nation was rejoicing over successive victories, the prospects of an early peace, and a glorious future, the Society, in connection with governmental, municipal, and other kindred bodies, expressed its profound abhorrence of a deed so fiendish as to be without a parallel in the history of our country, and without a name anywhere.

We have thus minutely, yet imperfectly, but, we trust, impartially, delineated the history of this Society from its origin to the present time. Having, without favor or malice, given a retrospect of some of the more discouraging features in its history during the past eighteen years of its existence, let us now turn and glance for a moment at the brighter side of the picture.

It is true there may not have been accomplished all that could have been desired, in a strictly literary and scientific point of view; investigations may not have been pursued that added many new facts to science; original observations may have been but few. Its more appropriate sphere has been the practical—the application of the discoveries of other learned bodies to the cure of disease and the alleviation of human suffering. In this particular, during the eighteen years of its existence and activity, much has been done. Fruits of long years of extensive experience have been matured. Free and frequent interchange of sentiments between its members, on almost every topic relating to the practice of medicine, surgery, and midwifery, have taken place. Much valuable knowledge on many obscure points in practice has been elicited, and many facts were communicated which would have remained hidden in the breast of some of our most experienced and successful practitioners. The dissertations, which have averaged during the whole period of the Society's career from seven to eight per annum, were mostly papers of a high order, and compare favorably, as literary efforts, in thought, in substance, composition, and instructiveness, with the productions of other

similar institutions. It is a source of regret that most of these exist only in manuscript, some of which, even, especially the earlier papers, may be entirely lost. If they could all be collected, they would constitute an exceedingly valuable volume.*

* The subjoined is a list of the papers referred to:—

- 1851.—Nov. 11. A paper was read on Scarlet Fever, by Wm. Curran, M. D.
- 1852.—Jan. 13. Dr. Parrish read a paper on the Natural Laws of Disease, or Medicine not a System.
- Feb. 10. A communication on the organization of the American Medical Association, by Dr. S. Jackson, 1500 copies of which were ordered to be published.
- March 9. Discussion on Anæsthetics.
- April 13. Discussion on Anæsthetics continued.
- 1853.—March 9. The subject of Acute Rheumatism, its Pathology and Treatment, was introduced by Dr. Turnbull.
- April 13. The subject of Puerperal Fever was discussed.
- Oct. 12. The recent prevalence of Yellow Fever in the neighborhood of South Street wharf was discussed.
- Nov. 9. The use of Calomel as a Remedy in the Diseases of Children, was discussed.
- Dec. 14. A paper on the Use and Abuse of the Lancet, was read by Dr. Remington.
- 1854.—Jan. 11. A paper on Anæsthetics in Surgery, was read by Dr. Betton.
- Feb. 8. Dr. Condie read a paper on the Pathology of Typhoid Fever.
- March 8. A paper on Uterine Hemorrhage, was read by Dr. Jewell.
- Oct. 11. Dr. Hollingsworth read a paper on the Employment of Bloodletting in the Treatment of Pneumonia.
- 1855.—Jan. 10. Dr. Lewis P. Gebhard read a paper on the Treatment of Puerperal Fever.
- Feb. 14. An interesting paper on Hooping Cough was read by Dr. Laurence Turnbull.
- March 14. A valuable paper on Cholera was presented and read by Dr. Henry Hartshorne.
- Oct. 10.—Iodide of Potassium was discussed.
- Nov. 14. Dr. Remington read a valuable introductory essay on Inhalation in Diseases of the Respiratory Organs.
- Dec. 12. The Use and Abuse of the Forceps; an introductory essay was read by Dr. Wm. Harris.
- 1856.—Jan. 9. Dr. Wm. Harris read a supplementary paper to the essay on the Use and Abuse of the Forceps, presented at the last meeting.
- Jan. 9. The Use of Alcohol in Disease; an able introductory paper, favorable to its employment, was read by Dr. H. Hartshorne.
- Oct. 8. Dr. D. Francis Condie read an interesting paper on the Pathology and Treatment of Yellow Fever.

If its Transactions cannot hereafter be published in permanent form, ought not a copy of every paper prepared for and read before the Society, be preserved in its archives? The annual addresses of the several presiding officers, which have been mostly published in pamphlet form, would form another interesting volume. In this connection, the volume of debates prepared by the Secretary with so much care, deserves, also, mention.

1856.—Nov. 12. The Hygienic Treatment of Disease, was introduced by Dr. Jno. Bell by some interesting remarks.

Dec. 10. Dr. James M. Corse read an introductory paper on Certain Forms of Paralysis which are curable.

1857.—Jan. 14. Dr. S. Littell read a paper upon Electricity as a Cause of Disease.

March 11. Dr. A. Nebinger read a paper on the Nature and Treatment of Smallpox.

Oct. 14. The Treatment of Dysentery was announced as the subject for discussion. Dr. Condie delivered an instructive lecture on it.

Nov. 11. The Treatment of Scarlatina was announced as the subject for discussion. Dr. Nebinger introduced the subject with some highly interesting remarks.

Dec. 9. The discussion on Croop was opened in an able lecture by Dr. H. Hartshorne.

1858.—Jan. 13. Dr. R. K. Smith read a paper on Rheumatism.

Feb. 15. Dr. Turnbull reported a case of large Cephalæmatoma.

March 10. Dr. Thomas read an essay on the subject of anæsthetics.

Sept. 8. Placenta Prævia. Dr. W. L. Atlee read Propositions in the Treatment of Placenta Prævia.

Oct. 13. Dr. J. J. Leveck read a paper on Sunstroke.

Nov. 10. Infantile Convulsions were discussed.

Dec. 8. Dr. Remington read a paper on the Pathology and Treatment of Neuralgia.

1859.—Jan. 12. Delirium Tremens was the subject of discussion.

March 9. The Evils of Ardent Spirits and Tobacco, considered in their Moral, Social, and Physical Influences. Introductory Remarks by Dr. Condie.

Sept. 12. Dr. Jewell read an essay on the question, Has Yellow Fever ever originated in the latitude of Philadelphia?

Oct. 12. Dr. J. J. Woodward read a paper on Tuberculosis.

Nov. 9. Dr. W. L. Atlee read an essay on the Diagnosis of Ovarian Tumors.

Dec. Dr. R. P. Thomas read an essay on the subject of Hernia.

1860.—Jan. 11. Dr. Condie read an essay on the subject of Bloodletting.

Feb. 8. Dr. Atlee read a paper on the Differential Diagnosis of Ovarian Tumors.

Feb. 15. The discussion on Bloodletting was continued.

During the year which has just terminated, while I had the honor and the pleasure of presiding over its deliberations, the subjects which claimed the scientific attention of the Society were not less important and interesting than those of preceding years. The following were the principal ones, some of which elicited spirited discussion: "Puerperal Fever;" "Diseases of the Membrana Tympani;" the "Laryngoscope;" "Cholera;" "The Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the American Medical Association;" "The Therapeutic Application of Muriate of Ammonia;" and "Dystochia."

1860.—March 14. Dr. H. Hartshorne read a paper on Diphtheria.

March 28. The discussion on Diphtheria was continued.

Sept. 12. Dr. Corse read a paper on Abortion, its Causes, Dangers, and Treatment.

Oct. 10. Dr. Hamilton read a paper on Opium as a Therapeutic Agent.

Nov. 14. Dr. S. D. Gross read a paper on the Tendency of the Present Day in regard to the Doctrine of Debility, and the Treatment of Disease by Stimulants.

Dec. 12. Dr. Atlee read a paper in continuance of the subject of the Differential Diagnosis of Ovarian Tumors.

1861.—Jan. 9. Dr. Worthington read a paper on Puerperal Insanity.

Feb. 13. Dr. Levick made some remarks on Chorea, the subject for discussion.

March 13. Dr. Corse read a paper on the Microscope in its Application to Pathology and Diagnosis.

Sept. 11. Stimulants in Acute Diseases, opened by Dr. Hartshorne.

Oct. 9. Dr. Nebinger read a paper on Puerperal Convulsions.

Nov. 13. Variola, its Modifications and Treatment, by Dr. Bell.

Dec. 11. Dr. Sargent read a paper upon Infantile Remittent Fever.

1862.—Jan. 8. Dr. Atkinson read a paper on Veratrum Viride.

Feb. 12. Dr. D. F. Condie read a paper on Nature and Art in the Cure of Disease.

March 2. Fever in its Relation to Inflammation, a paper by Dr. W. Darrach.

Nov. 12. Dr. Stillé read a paper on Asthma.

Dec. 18. Dr. Hartshorne introduced the subject of Puerperal Fever.

1863.—Jan. 14. Dr. Turnbull read a paper on Nervous Deafness.

March 11. Dr. J. Cheston Morris read a paper on Scarlatina.

Sept. 9. Dr. Corse read a valuable paper on Urinary Deposits.

Oct. 14. Dr. J. J. Levick read a valuable paper on Miasmatic Typhoid Fever.

Dec. 9. Dr. Wittig read a paper on Elimination in the Treatment of Disease.

The various sanitary and necrological reports to the State Society, which emanated from the Philadelphia County Medical Society, also deserve favorable mention. They form part of the medical literature of the times. Some of them were prepared with great care. Embracing, as they do, the mortuary statistics for the years for which they were respectively written, they will be invaluable to the future statistician and biographer.

But we claim still more for the Society in a literary and scientific point of view. It has been honored on four different occasions by the State Society, in selecting from her delegates the president of that body. Custom and subsequent enactment devolved upon these functionaries the duty of delivering addresses at the close of their respective terms of office. The contributions thus made to the literature of the profession, may be justly claimed as its own.

A distinguished member of the Society, some years since, was elected President, and another, at a subsequent time, first Vice-President of the American Medical Association. In the course of events, it became the duty of both to deliver addresses before that body. Other members were appointed chairmen of committees, who presented able and valuable reports on various important subjects. If time permitted, it would be an agreeable task to pursue this train of thought further, and endeavor to point out the relation which some of these masterly productions sustain to the Society whose members furnished them.

1864.—Jan. 13. Dr. Hamilton read a paper on Cholera Infantum.

March 9. Dr. Atkinson introduced the subject of Interference in Natural Labor.

Sept. 14. Dr. Burns read a paper on Spotted Fever.

Oct. 12. Dr. Turnbull read a paper on Foreign Bodies in the Ear.

Nov. 9. Dr. W. Darrach introduced Local Diseases that demand Constitutional Treatment.

Dec. 11. Dr. Shapleigh read a paper on Criminal Abortion.

1865.—Feb. 8. Prof. Rogers gave an interesting lecture on Urinary Deposits.

Sept. 13. Dr. Condie read a paper on Typhoid Fever.

Oct. 11. Dr. Nebinger read a paper on Cholera.

Oct. 25. Dr. Gebhard read a paper on the Treatment of Cholera.

Nov. 8. Dr. J. Cheston Morris read a paper on Uterine Displacements.

Dec. 13. Dr. Joseph Leidy gave a very interesting lecture upon Human Entozoa.

In conclusion, my fellow-members, I congratulate the Society upon the harmony, the cordiality, and good fellowship which characterized all its proceedings during the past year. Thanking you again, and heartily, for the honor which your partiality bestowed upon me, and for the patience with which you have borne with me on the present occasion, I now most cheerfully transfer the chair, with all its duties and responsibilities, to him whom you have chosen to be my successor. I beg to bespeak for him the same courtesy and kind forbearance which you have extended to myself. I also congratulate you, Mr. President elect, upon your newly-acquired honors, which become you so well. Your known antecedents in this Society, as a zealous and faithful worker in every position hitherto intrusted to you, are the best possible guarantee that the objects of the Society will be sedulously cared for and greatly promoted during your presidency.

